



January 14, 2014

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to voice serious concerns about AB 617. This bill puts children and schools in the center of an ongoing, politicized process.

In Madison, our focus is on ensuring that every school is a thriving school that prepares every student for college, career and community. We know that to be successful, we must stay incredibly focused on the day-to-day work of great teaching and learning for every child.

Academic standards help provide us with the guidance to hold every student to high expectations and ensure they have the skills to be successful. But that is only possible when educators are incredibly focused using the standards to deliver the best possible instruction every day. Instead of keeping our focus there, this bill would create an environment of instability that would distract schools from the crucial, day-to-day work that actually yields results for children.

It is healthy to review and make adjustments to standards over time, but this bill would create a politicized process that would significantly disrupt the progress we can make. Districts need to focus their time and energy on providing the very best instruction to children, not on ongoing political uncertainty.

If you have any questions, please contact Rachel Strauch-Nelson on my staff at 663-1903 or rmstrauchnel@madison.k12.wi.us. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Cheatham, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Madison Metropolitan School District